

MISSOURI. Conservationist

VOLUME 69, ISSUE 12, DECEMBER 2008 • SERVING NATURE & YOU



Impacting Generations

A November 1955 photo of my great-grandfather, Robert G. Murphy, displaying a white-tailed buck at the Moniteau County check station, serves to remind me of the impact each generation

has on the next. As a farmer and outdoorsman, he was dependent on the land to provide for his family's financial, social and recreational needs. Having grown up in the early 1900s, the value of wise resource management was seen firsthand. His generation was eyewitness to the impacts of life with low fish and game numbers, depleted forest resources and extreme soil erosion problems.

History documents the unique commitment of Missourians to the outdoors and the many steps taken since the mid-1930s to support and enhance conservation. Conservation's greatest successes have come about because of citizen commitment and the power of partnerships. It still works that way today.

Many partnerships may go unnoticed; however, the resulting benefits are huge. Each year, through a competitive bid process, more than 350 local farmers plant/harvest crops on land managed by the Department. Cooperative agreements are in place with more than 900 rural volunteer fire departments—our first line of defense against wildfires. Hundreds of agreements with communities provide citizens “close-to-home” fishing and outdoor recreational opportunities. County governments partner to assure area access roads are properly maintained and the public has access to conservation areas. These partnerships, and many others, allow priority forest, fish, and wildlife management practices to be completed while also providing additional far-reaching benefits to families, communities and the state.

Similar to past generations, conservation challenges still exist in Missouri. A few examples include invasive species, diseases, balancing needs of both abundant and rare wildlife, long-term demand of maintaining infrastructure (ranging from boat ramps to shooting ranges to wetland areas to nature centers), and limited revenues in a period of rising inflation and energy costs.

Encouraging, though, is the fact that—based on high citizen involvement levels and a growing partner list—Missourians remain committed to ensuring the legacy of wise resource management continues. A sincere “thank you” to all citizens actively engaged in Missouri's conservation programs. For those looking to become more involved, I encourage you to contact one of your Regional Conservation Offices to explore opportunities (see Page 3). The future of our state's conservation success story depends on continued citizen support.

My great-grandfather's passion for the outdoors reinforces an important family goal. This goal is to provide my daughters, Emily and Lauren, firsthand outdoor experiences that help instill the value and importance of Missouri's forest, fish, and wildlife. A solid understanding is essential for developing a commitment able to advance conservation to the next level—this fact remains as true today as it was decades ago.

Robert Ziehmer, assistant director



(Top) Robert G. Murphy. (Bottom) Robert Ziehmer with Emily (left) and Lauren (right).









OUR MISSION: *To protect and manage the fish, forest and wildlife resources of the state; to serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities; and to provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy and learn about fish, forest and wildlife resources.*



Cover by Noppadol Paothong
Left: courtesy of Ted Bare.

NextGEN

This section reports on goals established in *The Next Generation of Conservation*. To read more about this plan, visit www.MissouriConservation.org/12843.

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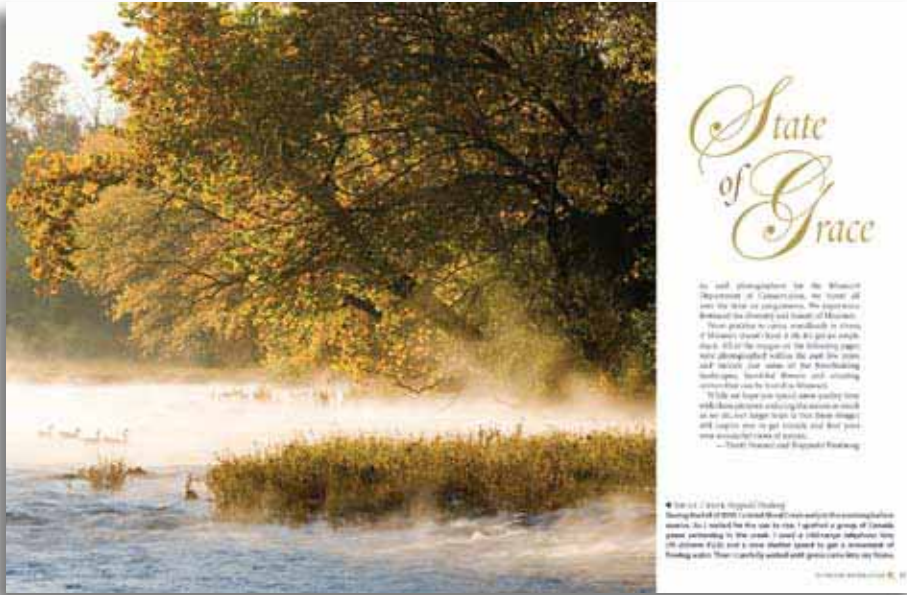
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GRACIOUS FANS

I was awed by the pictures in the *State of Grace* article in the September magazine. It makes me so proud to be a Missourian.

Some of the sites pictured are part of my family's memory bank. And I'm very impressed by the talent of Noppadol Paothong and David Stonner. Thanks for the wonderful views of our state.

Mary Lee Chivetta, Ballwin

Through the years, I've consistently admired the photos in the *Conservationist*, but I never expressed my appreciation. It's time. Congratulations on the outstanding September issue, with its excellent cover, contents page photo, and *State of Grace* essay. I definitely enjoyed the comments by the photographers.

Kathy O'Neill, via Internet

Thank you very much for including the camera settings in your articles and photos submitted

by your photographers Noppadol Paothong and David Stonner. As an amateur photographer myself, I find them helpful.

Esther Schulz, Fenton

TEA-TIME COMPANION

I just pulled the October *Conservationist* out of my mailbox. Every time it arrives, I get a hot cup of tea and read from cover to cover! My husband's parents live in Ash Grove, and his dad sends the magazine to us in Denver, Colo. My sons duck hunt, fish and also love to check out the hunting articles. My passion is the horticulture info you



provide. Every issue is wonderful! The picture of the gray tree frog is awesome [Reader Photo: *Sticky Fingers*]. Adam, your photograph is excellent, keep up the good work! Someday you may be the photo expert for this magazine!

Kathie Norris, Denver, Colo.

CAUGHT IN A PICKLE

I have always known Missourians were a unique bunch, having been born and raised in St. Francois County. However, Page 11 of the October issue of *Conservationist* has achieved the impossible. How on earth did you move the 180 acres of Pickle Springs Natural Area from south of St. Louis to east of Kansas City as indicated on the small green outline of the state? Just kidding.

I really enjoy your magazine. I have many fond memories of hunting, fishing and camping in the 1940s and several times since while visiting relatives. You will find my name appearing on the list of nonresident fishing permits on many occasions.

Ted Henderson, Oak Harbor, Wash.

Editors' note: We failed to move the icon from the previous month's location. We regret any confusion this might have caused.

FALL TURKEY, CONT.

Mr. Goodwin: I liked your *Missouri's October Turkey Season* article in the October issue. Were you the one who experienced this? If not you, who did? I appreciate that you explained what fall turkey season is. I've shot a turkey before, but not in the fall. You've shown me the difference between spring and fall turkey season.

Matt Cruse, via Internet

Editors' note: "All the situations in that article are about things that happened to me while turkey hunting. It's a sport I'll never grow tired of. Have fun turkey hunting. And if you tag one, try that recipe for turkey legs and thighs. I think you will enjoy it."—Mark Goodwin

Correction: The author of the *Fall Turkey* letter in the October issue was not mentioned. The letter should have been attributed to Mike Reed of Jackson.

MISSOURI. Conservationist

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CONSERVATIONIST STAFF

Editor In Chief *Ara Clark*
Managing Editor *Nichole LeClair*
Art Director *Cliff White*
Writer/Editor *Tom Cwynar*
Staff Writer *Bonnie Chasteen*
Staff Writer *Jim Low*
Photographer *Noppadol Paothong*
Photographer *David Stonner*
Designer *Stephanie Thurber*
Artist *Dave Besenger*
Artist *Mark Raithel*
Circulation *Laura Scheuler*

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Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 573-751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

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DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

Phone: 573-751-4115
Address: PO Box 180,
Jefferson City 65102-0180

REGIONAL OFFICES

Southeast/Cape Girardeau: 573-290-5730
Central/Columbia: 573-884-6861
Kansas City: 816-655-6250
Northeast/Kirksville: 660-785-2420
Southwest/Springfield: 417-895-6880
Northwest/St. Joseph: 816-271-3100
St. Louis: 636-441-4554
Ozark/West Plains: 417-256-7161

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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OMBUDSMAN QUESTIONS

Phone: 573-522-4115, ext. 3848
Address: Ombudsman, PO Box 180,
Jefferson City 65102-0180
E-mail: Ombudsman@mdc.mo.gov

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Phone: 573-522-4115, ext. 3245 or 3847
Address: Magazine Editor, PO Box 180,
Jefferson City 65102-0180
E-mail: Magazine@mdc.mo.gov

READER PHOTO SUBMISSIONS

Address: *Missouri Conservationist*, Reader Photo,
PO Box 180, Jefferson City 65102-0180
E-mail: Readerphoto@mdc.mo.gov



Reader Photo FURRY FIND

Robert Johnson of Columbia captured this photo of a beaver at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area. Johnson said when he first heard the beaver: "I thought it was a muskrat, but when the sun came up far enough, I was surprised to discover it was a beaver." Johnson said the beaver stayed around for nearly an hour, providing ample opportunity to photograph it. "I started wildlife photography so that I can 'hunt' year round," said Johnson. "I really love sitting in a deer stand or hunting blind, and with photography, I can do that all year."

on the WEB

This month check out our featured Web pages, or go online anytime to learn more about conservation at www.MissouriConservation.org.



FLUSH WITH ENVY

www.MissouriConservation.org/18949

Get the feel for a quail hunt with this engaging video slideshow featuring images from *Conservationist* photographer David Stonner.



STONE COLD FISHING

www.MissouriConservation.org/18703

Don't let old man winter keep you inside. Get out and enjoy some winter trout fishing at select Missouri lakes and streams.



DEER SEASON TALLY

www.MissouriConservation.org/18950

Check out this handy online map to see real-time deer harvest data by county. Find information on antlered bucks, button bucks and does.



ASK THE OMBUDSMAN

This is my first column as the new ombudsman for the Department. I came on the job in mid-October following the retirement of Ken Drenon, who provided more than 10 years of excellent service as ombudsman. Rather than start with a question and answer, I want to use this first month's column to introduce myself.

I have worked for the Department since 1986, when I moved here from my home state of Mississippi following graduate school. Most of my career has been spent as a botanist, traveling all over Missouri and learning of its plants, habitats, wildlife, geology, geography and people. It was a great education for me—I even learned which small-town cafes serve the best homemade pies. I live in Jefferson City with my wife, Leah, and children, Anna and Henry. My free time is spent gardening, fishing, upland bird hunting and woodworking.

As a botanist, I handled thousands of public requests on plant-related topics. I always enjoyed that part of my job—providing answers while sharing an appreciation of the outdoor world. In my new position I look forward to giving quality public service on a much wider range of conservation-related topics. I have already learned much in addressing the myriad questions that come to the ombudsman's desk every day. Assisting me are hundreds of my Department coworkers, who often are the best sources for the specific information that is requested. As ombudsman I will try to be an efficient link between your information needs and the information sources available to me.

I look forward to hearing from you!—*Tim Smith*

Ombudsman Tim Smith will respond to your questions, suggestions or complaints concerning Department of Conservation programs. Write him at PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180, call him at 573-522-4115, ext. 3848, or e-mail him at Ombudsman@mdc.mo.gov.

on the TV

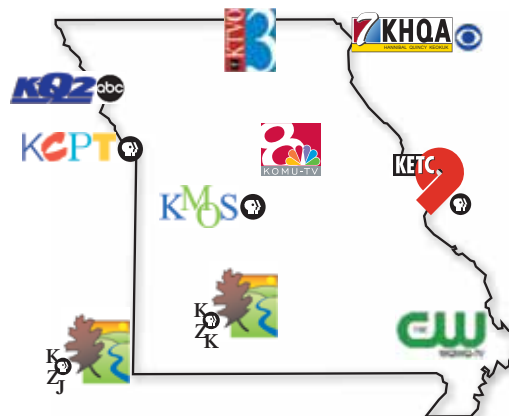
For additional show information and video clips, be sure to visit

www.MissouriConservation.org/8726.



Television
the way
nature
intended!

Check local listings for times in your area.





Species of Concern **Bald Eagle—Recovered!**



Common name: Bald eagle

Scientific names: *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Range: Statewide

Classification: Secure

To learn more about endangered species: www.MissouriConservation.org/8227

MISSOURI GOT GREAT news in September when the Conservation Commission removed the bald eagle from Missouri's endangered species list. Less than 30 years ago, the species was on the ropes due to habitat loss, pesticide poisoning and illegal shooting. From 1962 to 1981, Missouri did not have a single known successful eagle nest. Public outrage and aggressive enforcement of laws protecting eagles dramatically reduced shooting, and a national ban on the pesticide DDT in 1972 gave the nation's symbol a fighting chance at raising young. From 1981 to 1991, the Conservation Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Dickerson Park Zoo brought 74 wild-hatched eaglets from states with thriving populations to Missouri. These birds were placed in artificial nests, where they matured and took their first flights. Today Missouri has more than 150 active bald eagle nests, and that number doubles every five years or so. With vigilance, these majestic birds will continue to thrive.

PHOTO: DAVID STONNER; ART: MARK RAITHEL

Hurricane Hurts Birds

Missouri migrants need homes year-round.

Hurricane Ike did more than dump up to 9 inches of rain on Missouri. The 600-mile-wide mega-storm laid waste to Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge and other wetland areas along the Gulf Coast. The devastation will deprive hummingbirds of a refueling stop on their way to Central America and crowd king rails, blue-winged teal, great egrets and other migratory birds together in remaining wetlands. That could affect their winter survival and their physical condition going into next year's nesting season.



Feral Hog Eradication

Swine threatened the rare Mead's milkweed plant.

Botanists are breathing easier following the removal of hundreds of feral hogs from east-central Missouri. A serious infestation of free-ranging swine in Iron and Reynolds counties threatened the largest concentration of Mead's milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*), a state-endangered species. Efforts to control Missouri's growing feral hog population got a boost last year when Gov. Matt Blunt formed a task force to marshal state and federal resources against the problem. Workers used corral-type traps, snares and aerial shooting to remove more than 500 hogs from the wild, including 300 from the area with Mead's milkweed.



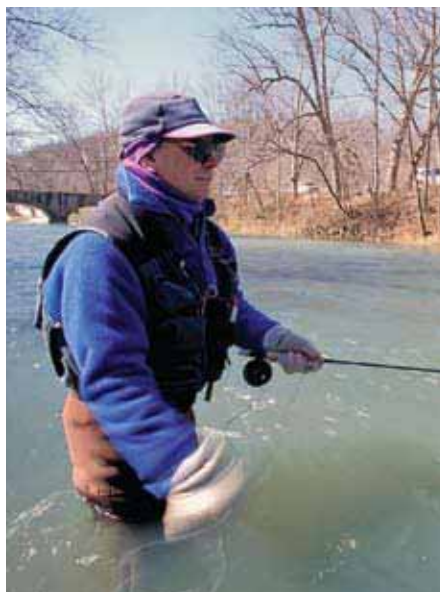
Releasing pigs to run free is illegal and threatens native plant and animal life. Feral hogs also carry diseases that can infect domestic livestock and humans. For more information, visit www.MissouriConservation.org/7849.



Cuivre River Winter Float

Solitude abounds on this St. Louis region stream.

Cuivre River is a hidden treasure in northeast Missouri. From the meeting of its two forks to its mingling with the Mississippi River, this stream's aspect changes from Ozark stream to bayou. Largemouth and smallmouth bass and green sunfish populate its upper stretches, joined by white bass and crappie at the lower end. Catfish are everywhere. Access is via boat ramp at Cuivre Island CA in St. Charles County and the new Millsap Access for canoes and wade-fishing north of Truxton in western Lincoln County. Visit www.MissouriConservation.org/a8801 for more information.



is available by calling: Bennett Spring State Park, west of Lebanon, 417-532-4338; Maramec Spring Park, southeast of St. James, 573-265-7801; Montauk State Park, south of Salem, 573-548-2201; or Roaring River State Park, south of Cassville, 417-847-2539.

Give Rainbows for Christmas

A unique holiday gift will create memories for a lifetime.

What gift could be more exciting than catching rainbow trout from the crystal waters of an Ozarks spring branch? Montauk, Bennett Spring and Roaring River state trout parks are open for catch-and-release fishing 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fridays through Mondays the second Friday in November through the second Monday in February. Maramec Spring Park opens its gates to anglers from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily throughout the winter season. Take a day or two while school is out to wet a line with someone you love. Tackle shops in the parks have the necessary gear and good advice for beginners. Further information

Trail Guide



TAKE A HIKE ON CAMPUS



CAPE GIRARDEAU RESIDENTS share a great recreational and educational resource with visitors to southeast Missouri. Located just off I-55 at Exit 99, this facility features 1.3 miles of hiking trails through diverse

landscapes, plus a 17,000-square-foot nature center. The wheelchair-accessible Ridgetop Trail traverses .3 miles of oak-hickory forest with wild acid-soil shrubs, such as wild blueberry and farkleberry. The 1-mile White Oak Trace encircles Pawpaw Valley and Sinkhole Bottom with a pair of loops. Both trails are furnished with benches for relaxing, and an overlook deck offers a view of Pawpaw Valley. Inside the nature center, you can tour exhibits that delve into southeast Missouri's unique biological and cultural heritage. Building hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Hiking trails are open from sunrise to 10 p.m. daily.

Area name: Cape Girardeau Conservation Campus Nature Center

Trails: Ridgetop Trail & White Oak Trace

Unique features: Disabled-accessible trail section

For more information: Call 573-290-5218 or visit

www.MissouriConservation.org/areas/cnc/cape/



TAKING ACTION

"J.J." Jones' Gift**Taking Raptors Down a Notch***Spikes discourage predators' hunting from power poles.*

Taberville Prairie Conservation Area is a great place to find a date, if you're a greater prairie chicken. However, it is also a popular hunting spot for raptors.

Taberville Prairie, in St. Clair County, 3.5 miles north of Taberville, is one of the few native tallgrass prairies remaining in Missouri. It was purchased by the Conservation Department in 1959 for the preservation of the prairie chicken.

Male prairie chickens gather on communal sites, known as leks, to compete for females' attention. They dance, display their feathers and throat sacs, and produce booming mating calls that can carry more than a mile. Unfortunately, raptors visiting these displays have an eye on dinner, not the show. With population numbers at such low levels, it is important to discourage predators from disrupting the leks.

The Conservation Department, Audubon Missouri, and KAMO Power recently collaborated to install raptor spikes on power poles that crisscross an area of Taberville CA adjacent to a lek. Many species of hawks, especially red-tailed hawks (the most abundant large hawk in Missouri), are most effective when they can hunt from an inconspicuous perch and ambush their prey—and power poles are ideal. A soaring hawk is much easier to spot than one sitting motionless. The spikes will not harm the hawks, and they could help tip the odds in the prairie chickens' favor.



JULIA JANE "J.J." JONES loved the outdoors. Whether bird watching, fishing, gardening or just simply being outside, she was at her best when surrounded by nature. Born and raised in rural Missouri, she traveled extensively with her husband, who worked for United Airlines, living in various places while raising two children. After retiring, she settled in Springfield. She discovered the Springfield Conservation Nature Center and visited frequently.

In 2002, J.J. was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Her daughter, Anne Tunnell, moved to Springfield to care for her full time. They continued to visit the nature center and to trout fish whenever possible. Even though she forgot the names of birds and flowers, she still loved being outdoors. Unfortunately, she forgot how to fish. Anne and others would place a pole in her hands because she couldn't remember the physical motions of casting. It has been said, however, that fishing gets into the heart of the angler. Mrs. Jones would sit and wait patiently until she felt a tug on the line, then she instinctively knew what to do. Sadly, she succumbed to her disease at the age of 84 in June 2005.

J.J. felt that nothing should be taken for granted and that it was her responsibility to take care of the things she loved. Because of her philosophy, she left a \$28,000 trust fund to the nature center through the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation. This generous donation allowed them to complete a long overdue construction project that doubled the size of the shop area. They also purchased native plants for flower beds and a fishing simulator so visitors of all ages can enjoy the experience of landing a big one.—by Linda Chorice



Comment on Permit Changes

Share your thoughts on changes through Dec. 16.

The Conservation Department encourages Missourians to express their feelings and offer suggestions on recent changes made to hunting and fishing permits by the Missouri Conservation Commission. Missourians have until Dec. 16 to offer feedback during the official comment period. However, comments are still encouraged, and will be accepted for consideration, beyond this deadline.

A plain-language summary of the changes is available at www.MissouriConservation.org/18728. The legal version is in the Missouri Register at www.MissouriConservation.org/9473. The 30-day comment period started on Nov. 17 closes Dec. 16. The changes are scheduled to become effective July 1, 2009.

Comments can be sent to Dave Erickson, Regulations Committee, MDC, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180 or submitted online at www.MissouriConservation.org/18970. All comments will be compiled and sent to the Conservation Commissioners for their information and consideration. The Commission may decide to rescind, alter or continue with changes as previously approved.

Conservation Department Assistant Director Dave Erickson chairs the agency's Regulations Committee. He said the committee began developing recommendations for permit changes more than a year ago in response to several needs. The permit changes recommended by the committee were designed to maintain revenues, simplify the permit structure and make it more consistent and encourage new hunters.

"Whatever economy measures we implement will have to take into account biological and social factors, as well as the Department's finances," said Erickson. "Missourians are proud of their conservation program, and they have high expectations for what they get from it. The Commission has to strike a balance between services that hunters and anglers consider essential and the growing cost of those services." —Jim Low

Rabbit Hunting

Scout it Out



Name: Locust Creek Conservation Area

Location: Sullivan County, 1 mile west of Milan. Access the area from Highway 5, off of River Road and Ribbon Road.

For more info: Call 660-785-2420 or go to www.MissouriConservation.org/a8235



FIND HARES-A-PLenty at conservation areas statewide. For example, 3,469-acre Locust Valley Conservation Area in Sullivan County provides great rabbit hunting, with lots of walk-around room for hunters. Hunting areas can be accessed from numerous parking areas or area roads.

Locust Creek splits the area, although you often can find a way to cross the creek unless the water is high.

As a former quail focus area, Locust Creek was the beneficiary of numerous habitat improvement practices, including prescribed burning, shrub planting and edge feathering. These practices greatly benefited other wildlife species, including songbirds, deer and, of course, rabbits. Edge feathering proved particularly good for hares, because knocking down large trees along field edges created instant brushpiles, which protect the bunnies from predators.

The area features rolling topography with lots of small fields separated by disked strips, plus numerous brushy draws and drainages. Contract farmers leave 10 percent of the crop for wildlife. Numerous food plots further supplement the diets of deer, turkey, quail and rabbits.



A Deeper Sleep

Many animals hibernate to escape winter food shortages.

Hibernation seems like a great strategy. You keep the covers over your head through months of snow, sleet and freezing temperatures, then wake up to glorious spring. Missouri has several true hibernators, including several species of bats, woodchucks, chipmunks, two species of squirrels and at least one mouse species.

What characterizes “true” hibernation is the depth of sleep. Hibernators slow down their metabolism so much that they are difficult to rouse. During hibernation, for example, woodchucks lower their body temperature from somewhat near ours to about 50 degrees, their heart rate drops to single digits from a normal rate of about 160 beats per minute, and they might only take one breath per minute. Skunks, bears, opossums and many other animals sleep deeply for long periods but don’t really hibernate. Their heart rates and core temperatures drop less, and they can be awakened more easily than true hibernators.

Hibernation is useful when food supplies, such as insects or vegetation are in short supply. Many birds respond to shortages by migrating, but Missouri’s hibernators just take a long nap.



Red bat

“Who Cooks for You?”

Barred owl courting calls relieve winter silence.

Barred owls (*Strix varia*) breed earlier than other birds; you can hear their courtship calls as early as December. Also known as hoot owls or, sometimes eight-hooters, barred owls call with series of eight accented notes, the last one ending with a downward pitch. The call can sound like, “Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all?”

The wings and chest of this species are streaked or “barred.” Like most owls, they call more at night. They are typically found in mixed forests and in river valleys. They usually avoid areas occupied by the deeper-voiced great horned owl, which is a primary predator of barred owls.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Evening Grosbeak



WHEN GOLDFINCHES SEEM fattish and you are emptying more bags of sunflower seeds than usual, you might well suspect that you are being visited by evening grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes vespertius*).

Evening grosbeaks don’t breed in Missouri, but these starling-size finches arrive at our winter feeders in droves. Although they don’t come every year. They are considered an irruptive species in that they don’t migrate, but masses of them will move south in response to shortages in their food supply or overcrowding. Their nomadic movements are hard to predict, but when they do visit an area, it’s usually in large, noisy flocks. Their diet mostly consists of seeds, sap, insects and berries, and they eat heartily. Counters saw one evening grosbeak consume 96 sunflower seeds in five minutes.

The birds have an ivory-color, hearty bill well suited for seed-busting. Evening grosbeak males have a distinctive yellow brow and show a lot more yellow than females, although not nearly as much as goldfinch males. Both males and females have black and white wings. Their size clearly distinguishes them from goldfinches. When perched at a finch feeder, they look like an adult at a second-grader’s desk.

Evening grosbeaks tend toward the outer branches of trees and shrubs, and they often forage on the ground for salt and other minerals. A group of grosbeaks is called a “gross.”



Keep Trash Out of Streams

Dumping is more than unsightly, it's unhealthy.

Do streams get down in the dumps? You bet! Discarded refuse can have devastating effects on stream quality and wildlife. Besides the obvious visual impact of cans, used tires and old refrigerators floating in streams, everything from toxic plastic chemicals to pesticide residue leaches out of dumps, impairing aquatic animals' health and making fish unwholesome to eat. If you see dumping on a conservation area, report it to the nearest Conservation Department office (see Page 3). County officials want to know about dumps developing along their roads, too. Dumpers might be surprised to discover that hefty fines can result from their bad habits.

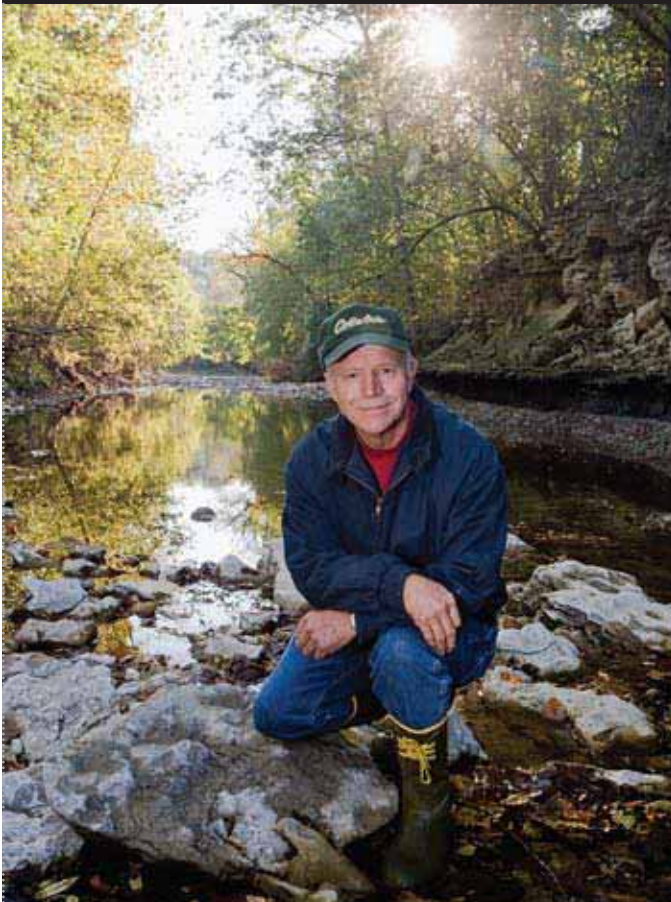


Why is Your Pond Muddy?

It might clear up on its own...or not.

Any pond can turn muddy after a heavy rain. In some ponds, however, muddiness is a persistent problem that requires corrective action to keep fish populations healthy. To discover why your pond is murky, collect a sample of water in a clean, half-gallon glass jar. Label the jar with the collection date and put it on a shelf where it won't be disturbed. If it clears in a week or two, the problem probably is wave action, soil erosion in the watershed or disturbance by bottom-feeding fish, muskrats or other wildlife. If the murk doesn't settle, add 2 tablespoons of vinegar. If the sample clears overnight, your problem likely is water chemistry and soil type. This problem often responds well to the treatment outlined on Page 53 of the *Missouri Pond Handbook*. The booklet is available at www.MissouriConservation.org/22. Printed copies are available on request from Missouri Department of Conservation, *Missouri Pond Handbook*, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180. Or by e-mailing pubstaff@mdc.mo.gov.

Stream Team



The Sugar Creek Beacons



FOURTH- AND FIFTH-graders in Gillman City got interested in the prairie stream near their school because endangered Topeka shiners lived there. Once they got their feet wet, there was no turning back. "They said that they were going to make things shine over there," recalls retired teacher Charles Jennings, who helped start the team. "That's why they called themselves the beacons." With support from their principal and school superintendent, they set about making Sugar Creek as clean as possible. They removed trash and got enthusiastic support from neighboring landowners and county officials to stop dumping. Then they began water-quality testing. They learned that muddy run-off from farmland was Sugar Creek's biggest problem. "What they learn in just a few hours would take an enormous time to teach from a text book," said Jennings, "and even then they wouldn't understand the way they do after learning it hands-on."

Stream Team Number: 893

Date formed: Feb. 3, 1997

Location: Harrison County

For more info about Stream Teams: www.mostreamteam.org



Our Glorious Forests

HENNING CA



Size: 1,534 acres

Location: West of Branson on Highway 76

Facilities: Hiking trails

Features: White River Balds Natural Area, and a permanent stream (Roark Creek)

Find more info: www.MissouriConservation.org/a8208

We All Live in a Forest

Emerging ethanol markets call for best practices.

With the price of oil and gas fluctuating, it makes sense to develop fuel alternatives here at home.

Wood is among the many renewable resources that can be converted to ethanol. Although Midwestern processing facilities and markets are still developing, they will soon be online to help landowners meet the growing demand for bio-fuels. Landowners can ready themselves for emerging markets by learning best harvesting practices. These will ensure landowners' ability to sustain forest health, as well as a steady supply of woody biomass for the market. Visit www.MissouriConservation.org/16130 to download a set of best management practices developed by the Conservation Department and its partners. Contact your local forester to learn about local opportunities to provide timber for this emerging market (see Page 3).

Rare Native Oak

Landscape-worthy seedlings in cultivation for 2010.

In 1974 botanist Paul Thompson noticed an unusual oak at an I-70 rest stop near Concordia. His discovery revealed a botanically rare, three-way hybrid that occurs only in Lafayette County. At the time, few specimens remained. Concordians hurried to get the rare acorns to the state nursery. Thanks to Friends of the Concordia Oak and the George O. White State Nursery, the oak's future is secure. To learn more about seedling availability, call Concordia Parks and Recreation at 660-463-4277.



VISITING BRANSON FOR the holidays? Be sure to stop by the Henning Conservation Area, the legacy of Ruth and Paul Henning. Paul is best known as the creator of the *Beverly Hillbillies*, *Green Acres*, and *Petticoat Junction* television series. His native landscape also inspired earlier writer Harold Bell Wright, whose 1907 book, *Shepherd of the Hills*,

immortalized local features such as Dewey Bald, Boulder Bald, Sammy Lane's Lookout, the Signal Tree and Little Pete's Cave. "Balds" are what local people called the area's scenic glades (open desert-like areas) that make up the White River Balds Natural Area. The area also includes a small section of bottomland forest along a half-mile stretch of Roark Creek, a relatively undisturbed Ozark headwaters stream. As you near the area on Highway 76, be sure to tune into the Conservation Department's broadcasts of local history and folklore on radio station AM 1630.



Interseed Wildflowers

Sow now to yield more food and cover for next summer.

Interseeding native wildflowers can increase plant diversity and improve wildlife habitat.

After setting back rank grass by disking, burning or spraying, broadcast or no-till drill seeds at a rate of 2 to 3 pounds of pure live



seed per acre. This practice is a great family activity. Mix seed with sawdust in a 5-gallon bucket, then give your kids small buckets of the mix to scatter. You'll yield a crop of smiles

now and a wealth of wildflowers next summer.

Kill a Feral Hog!

Hunters are urged to shoot these pests on sight.

Feral hogs are domestic hogs gone wild. No one owns them, and they threaten humans, pets, wildlife and farm animals. The state of Missouri is trying to eliminate these pests from the landscape. There are three simple things you can do to help. First, if you encounter a feral hog while hunting deer or other game, shoot it on sight. During most of the year, no permit is required and any method, including baiting and using dogs, is allowed. However, special restrictions apply during the fall firearms deer and turkey hunting seasons. Second, report sightings of feral hogs to the



Department of Conservation at 573-522-4115 ext. 3147.

Third, keep domestic hogs penned and report illegal releases on the

Operation Game Thief Hotline at 1-800-392-1111.

Grant Funds Benefit Grand River Grasslands Landowners

On the Ground



“WE’RE TALKING ABOUT linking 6,000 acres that are wildlife-friendly. That’s huge.” Department of Conservation Wildlife Management Biologist Dave Hoover is understandably excited about a new funding program aimed at helping Harrison County landowners practice sustainable prairie management within the Grand River Grasslands Conservation Opportunity Area. Totaling \$200,000, the funds come from a variety of sources, including John McPheeters, a trustee of The Nature Conservancy’s Missouri chapter; the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency and the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative.

“We’re focusing on working with conservation agencies and other groups to offer 100 percent cost-share assistance to private landowners,” said The Nature Conservancy’s Randy Arndt. “With this financial incentive, we hope that private landowners will take advantage of this opportunity to convert their cool-season pastures to native warm-season grasses and wildflowers that are good for their cattle and ground-nesting birds.” For more information, call Private Land Conservationist Kendall Coleman at 660-726-3746.



Become a Master Naturalist

Join your local chapter and sign up for training.

Turn your passion for nature into mastery that can make a difference. Become a master naturalist. Co-sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation and University of Missouri Extension, the Master Naturalist™ program helps you become a well-informed community leader dedicated to improving natural resources.

"I took the Master Naturalist training just so that I could learn more about our world for me," reports one member. "But now I realize that this kind of knowledge needs to be shared."

To become a Master Naturalist, enroll in a 40-hour course on Missouri's natural resource ecology and management. Once your training is complete, join your local chapter. To support your chapter, plan to donate 40 hours of natural resource-based volunteer service and achieve eight hours of continued education each year. Volunteer service falls into three categories: stewardship, education and interpretation, and citizen science.

Spring training starts in February and March in Columbia, Cole Camp, Camdenton, Gray's Summit and Rolla. Cost for the training varies by chapter. Visit www.MissouriConservation.org/9295 for more information.



Farewell to Year of the Frog

International effort raised awareness worldwide.

Although our beloved spring peepers sang as usual this year, frogs and other amphibians are disappearing worldwide. The causes? Habitat loss, pollution and disease. To counter this alarming trend, Amphibian Ark dubbed 2008 the international "Year of the Frog." Throughout the year, celebrities such as Kermit the Frog spoke on behalf of amphibians, and hundreds of international partners reached out to local communities. Here in Missouri, Department nature centers offered dozens of frog programs. To learn more about ongoing efforts to keep endangered amphibians afloat, visit www.AmphibianArk.org.

NATURE ACTIVITY

Runge Nature Center



RUNGE CONSERVATION Nature Center hopped into the leap year with the "Year of the Frog." This international effort was designed to raise awareness about the decline of amphibians worldwide (see related

story top right). In keeping with this year's froggy theme, our annual "Holiday Happenings" event will be titled "Hoppy Holidays." Our two-day celebration will include nature crafts, games, puppet shows, walks and other activities focused on Missouri's frogs and their relatives. We've also planned plenty of traditional holiday activities, such as bird walks, scavenger hunts, fireside stories, music and more. Bubba, the tree frog, may also make a special holiday appearance, so bring your holiday visitors and plan to spend an afternoon with us. Free refreshments will be served on both days.

Program: "Hoppy Holidays" Open House

When: Saturday, Dec. 27 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 28 from 1 to 4 p.m.

Where: Runge Conservation Nature Center on Highway 179 in Jefferson City

For more information: 573-526-5544. No registration required.

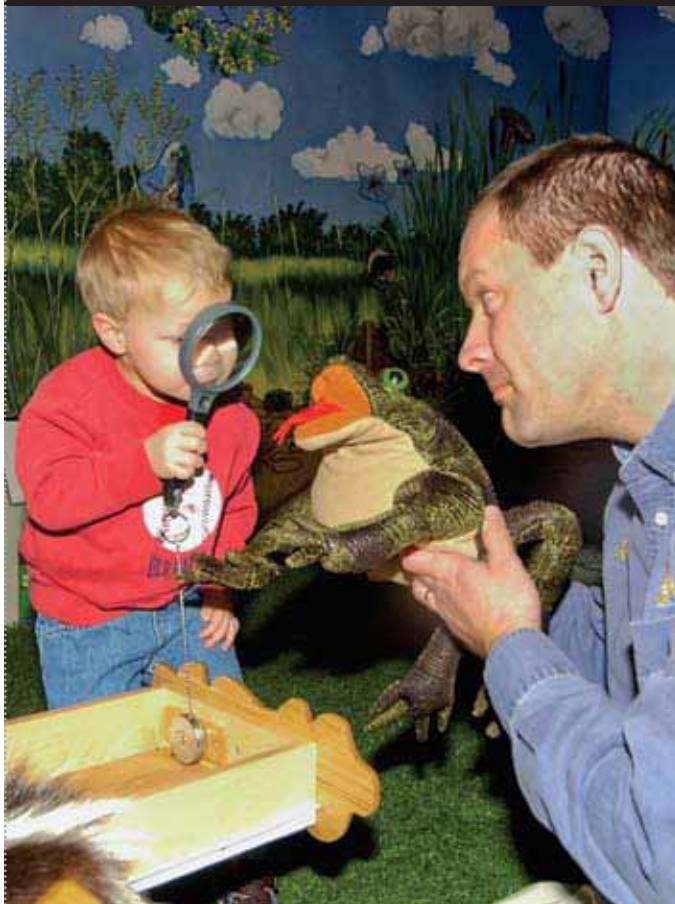




PHOTO SUBMITTED BY TED BARE

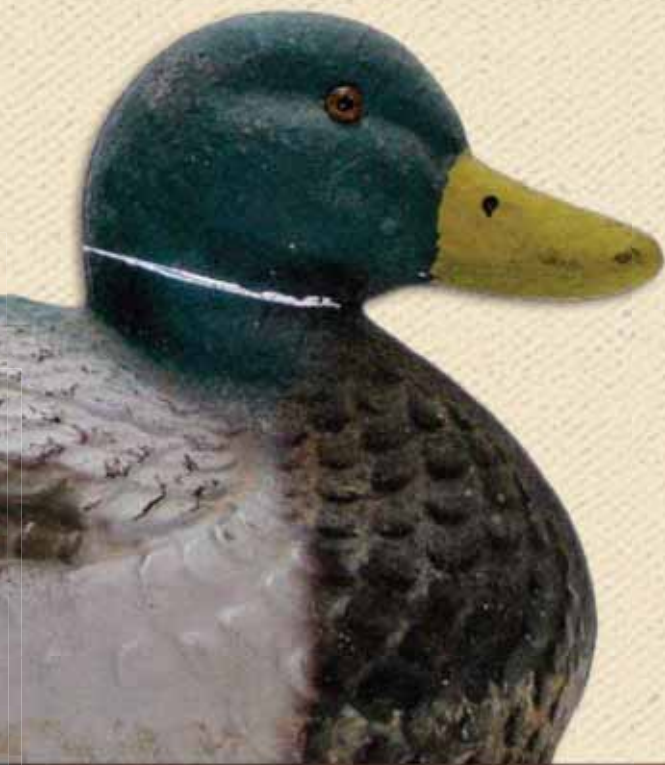
Ted Bare with his son, David, in 1987 with David's first goose.



Schell MEMORIES

Schell-Osage has provided
great waterfowling
adventures for generations
of hunters.

BY TED BARE



AS I REACHED OVER TO TURN OFF THE ALARM, my hand felt the wet nose of Deke, my 33-year-old son's big black Lab. The dog was sleeping between our beds at the motel in Eldorado Springs.

My son, David, and I were on a three-day waterfowl-hunting trip to Schell-Osage's Conservation Area. This was our third and last day to hunt. We were hunting without a reservation, and that morning it was my turn to try my luck at drawing a lower number for a good blind choice.

After loading our gear and Deke into the pickup, we headed to an all-night convenience store to fill our coffee thermoses and stock up on munchies. We weren't the only ones there that early. The store was busy with lots of crazy waterfowlers.

It took us about 20 minutes to reach Schell. Vehicles, boats and trailers packed the parking lot, and the crowded office reminded us how Saturday is usually a busy day at Schell.

"Well, Dad, I hope your luck is with you, or we may be headed home early," David said.

"No problem," I assured him. The first two days we were able to choose fairly good blinds—F-4 and C-6—because there were fewer parties than blinds, along with spots available in A-pool, which is a wade-and-shoot area. That Saturday, however, some parties would be going home without any blind or spot.

At 4:45 a.m. sharp, Ken Davis, the area manager, closed the party list and declared the drawing open for reservation holders. Those hunters crowded toward the two windows to draw a small cube with a position number on it from a covered wooden box. Reservation holders were guaranteed a low enough number to give them at least a

blind choice. The rest of the parties, like us, had to rely on the luck of their one representative to draw a low enough number for a blind or spot choice.

I had signed the party list, filled out my daily bag limit blue card and was seated on one of the old split log benches brought up years ago from the original office. I watched, listened and enjoyed the old familiar sights and sounds.

Surveying the room, I recognized many faces from previous years. There were some father-son pairs and hunting partner groups that I'd seen year after year at Schell. A father, son and grandfather were seated next to me. The 10-year-old boy was going to make the pick for the group, and he was nervously waiting his chance.

"Give me five—I'll bring you luck!" I said. He whacked my hand, smiling. I smiled too as I remembered a special hunt 20 years ago when David, then 13, stepped to the window to choose for us.

Previously, Ken had announced that Number 41 would be the first cube that morning. After the reservation holders were finished, a representative from each party eased toward the windows hoping to draw a number close to 41. I followed the boy, and he drew 47, which was a good low pick.

I reached in the box and withdrew cube number 76. I did the math in my head. "It'll be close," I told Dave.

After the position drawing concluded, parties were called to the windows starting with number 41. As groups chose their blinds or A-pool positions, the room slowly cleared, except for those of us who were hoping for a chance at one of the remaining blinds or spots.

They called out number 76 and we stepped up. The guy at the window said, "Only B-2 is left and it could be a sleeper." We took it.

I think all of Schell's blinds provide hunters a chance to work the ducks and geese in their area with no crowding. They can arrange decoy sets to make use of the wind and bring the ducks and geese to within good shotgun range.

Through the years I had experienced some good hunts in B-2, and the 20–30 miles per hour crosswind and cloudy sky that day pushed our expectations up.

I reminded David that it had been almost 20 years before—to the day—that he drew B-2 from the old-style squirrel cage that they used to hold the blind positions in.

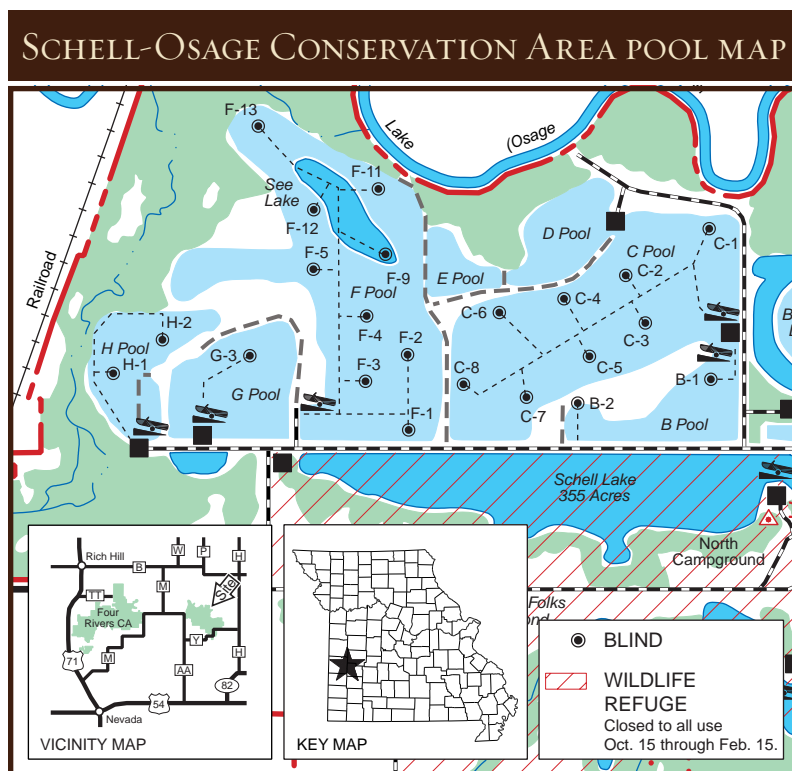
"I remember, Dad," he said. "I got my first goose and mallard drake that day."

We left the office and headed for a small cafe near the area for a big breakfast and more waterfowl stories. B-2 was a disabled-accessible blind designed to accommodate wheelchairs. One could drive right up to the back ramp of the blind to unload gear, so there was no need to hurry.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY TED BARE

◀ Ted Bare in 2007 at blind F-4 on Schell-Osage CA.



Our late arrival allowed us to get refills on ham, eggs, biscuits and gravy, and coffee, as well as memories.

As we changed into our waders in the warm office waiting room we received some tips for hunting from B-2 blind from Ken. We also showed him pictures of last year's hunting trip, which featured 14 inches of snow and spring floods of 11 feet.

A short trip along a levee brought us to our blind, and we unloaded our gear and went to work. Our roles were reversed from 20 years ago. Now it was my job to arrange guns, lunches and gear bags in the blind and to grass everything over with our portable grass sections.

David put out our decoy set with pulsators, rotowingers and wing-set landers. Deke took his position in the dog box at the end of the blind. After a final inspection we climbed in the blind, ready to hunt.

An overnight rain had stopped, but low clouds and 25-mph winds still persisted. Schell Lake was loaded with geese and ducks, both on the water and in the air above. In fact, they were trading back and forth over our heads as we were setting up in the semidarkness.

Shots from blind C-5 started the morning in grand style, and the excitement continued throughout the day. I had left my calls in the truck so calling was entirely David's responsibility. I think he was glad not to have to contend with my loud hail calls and ill-timed feeding chuckles.

B-2 had not been hunted for two days, and the ducks were regularly visiting the area. They decoyed readily to Dave's calling and reassurance chatter. By midmorning we had collected three plump mallard drakes. We couldn't even finish our lunch and coffee until the action slowed.

One more mallard drake fell to our guns in the early afternoon when a group of six slid right into the decoys with wings bowed, heads down and feet lowered.

As the afternoon waned, snow geese became more active. Family groups traded back and forth from Schell Lake to the Osage River. One returning group of six got careless.

"They're going to be in range, Dave," I whispered. Safeties clicked as we both rose as one. Two shots rang out and the second goose in line folded and dropped out of the formation. Deke hit the water with a tremendous surge, galloping out in the shallows for the retrieve. He took a little longer to secure a good hold on the larger snow goose than he did on the mallards.

As sunset grew near, I began cleaning up the inside of the blind, carrying blind bags, the cooler and the food bags out the back ramp to the access road. David was still on the lookout for some last action.

Just as I reached the road he fired once, dropping another mallard drake. "He just popped over the levee



**David and Kris Bare in 2006 at blind C-4 on the Schell-
Osage CA. Many more memories will be made on this area
for generations of waterfowl hunters.**

and sailed right in," he said. "What could I do?"

It was dark by the time we reached the office and turned in our daily blind cards. Bagging five mallards and one snow goose was not bad for a last-pick blind.

After goodbyes to the staff, we headed for the motel. During the drive, we reminisced about the many years we had hunted at Schell. My two sons grew up waterfowl hunting with me at Schell and, although they both now live in Indiana, one or both of them usually return each year for a three-day hunt.

I participate in the waterfowl blind reservation drawings each year, hoping for a reservation at Schell. Whether I get one or not, we know we will be back the following year. Schell is just too good a place to hunt waterfowl. ▲



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LES FORTENBERRY

Think outside the Box

Choose holiday gifts that encourage youngsters to enjoy the outdoors.

BY ANN KOENIG • PHOTOS BY CLIFF WHITE



Amid the bustle of the holiday season, take some time for a nostalgic visit back to your childhood. Even if you can only spare a few minutes, let your mind recall memories of being outdoors as a child.

Is there a grin on your face? Just thinking about those times is usually enough to put someone in a sweet frame of mind. Wouldn't it be wonderful to give the children in your life wonderful outdoor experiences that they could enjoy the rest of their lives?

Look at the children around you. Are they building strong relationships with nature, exploring woods, creeks, turtles and polliwogs, as you did as a child?

Most people will begrudgingly answer "no" to that question. Our children spend much more of their lives indoors than did children of previous generations. As a result we are seeing more pudginess, anxiety and hyperactivity among our young.

American children spend an average of 30 hours per week in front of a TV or a computer monitor. This lack of physical activity results in an increase of childhood obesity and an increased frequency of Attention Deficit

Disorder. According to a Seattle children's hospital, each hour per day a child watches TV increases the chance of developing symptoms of ADD by 10 percent.

Research and statistics aside, we instinctively know that nature play and being outdoors is good for the health of children in ways more numerous than the dew drops resting on a spider's web on a fall morning.

Children tend to play in a healthier manner, feel more self-worth and have more friends if they can play in nature. They also tend to have better attitudes and concentration after being outdoors, and those with ADD show a decrease in symptoms. More than 100 studies have concluded that being in nature reduces stress and the need for mood altering prescription drugs.

Missourians have a rich outdoor tradition. From the time of settlement until recently, the children of the people who lived here—as well as many adults—have spent countless hours wandering in the out-of-doors. They've waded Ozark streams, hiked through the oak-pine country of the south, trekked over loess hills and roamed rich farms in the northern part of the state. If no natural environment was avail-

Children who play in nature tend to feel more self-worth and play in a healthier manner.



“In nature, a child finds freedom, fantasy, and privacy, a place distant from the adult world, a separate peace.”

—Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*

able, they investigated overgrown alleys and ditches in Missouri’s towns and cities.

What we’ve learned firsthand from our ramblings, as well as from scientific studies, is that being in nature is a positive experience, and one that we should pass on to the next generation.

Children might not know what they miss by staying inside, but we do. Grandpas, grandmas, aunts, uncles, moms, dads and teachers can help our youngsters have a healthier, richer childhood.

A great opportunity is approaching. The holiday season is the time for giving, especially to children. You can choose gifts that encourage nature play. An outdoor gift might be as simple and practical as hardy outdoor wear that would let the child remain warm while playing outside in the cold. Other good ideas are backpacks, camping equipment, or fishing and hunting supplies. Maybe they’d appreciate a wind-up flashlight or a pocket knife. Another possibility is a “coupon” for a fishing, canoeing or camping trip.

Lots of other gifts might help steer your loved ones “outside the box” and back into nature.

Where can you find great gifts? Many farm, home and outdoor stores have outdoor items that children can use and appreciate. For unique gifts, try the National Arbor Day Foundation (www.arborday.org/shopping/sourcebook), the Missouri Botanical Garden, the St. Louis Science Center, Powell Gardens, St. Louis Zoo, the MDC Nature Shop or the gift shops at your local Conservation Department office.

For more information on putting children in touch with nature, visit any Conservation Department office or go to www.MissouriConservation.org. Learn about a national movement called The Children and Nature Network at www.childrenandnature.org. ▲

Gift Ideas for Kids

Going shopping? Here’s a list to help inspire you. Consider the child’s interests first. There’s something in the outdoors for everyone.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Field microscope | Self warming containers of hot chocolate |
| Flashlight | Books about outdoor adventures |
| Binoculars | Booklet of your memories of being outdoors as a child |
| Field guides (birds, flowers, insects, etc) | Rubber boots |
| Star charts | Insulated overalls |
| Telescope | Warm boots |
| Insect-viewing containers | Mittens or gloves |
| Butterfly nets | Umbrella |
| Camera | Hiking boots |
| Bird house | Rain coat and pants |
| Bird feeder and bird feed | Warm socks |
| Magnifying glass | Hand warmers |
| Plaster cast kit | Sled |
| CDs of bird songs, insect and frog calls | Easel and box of art supplies |
| Bow and arrows | Ice skates |
| Slingshot | Kayak |
| Fishing pole | Hiking stick |
| Seine | Snorkel and mask |
| Minnow bucket | Walkie talkies |
| Backpack | Topographic maps and compass |
| Rope | GPS unit |
| Camp shovel | Nature craft book |
| Pocket knife | Snow shoes |
| Rock hammer | |
| Tent | |
| Kelly kettle | |
| Hammock | |
| Sleeping bag | |
| Kid’s camping stove | |
| Canteen | |





Ducks *and* Geese: *They're Delicious!*

Fried duck
recipe on
Page 27



A rinse and a good recipe transform waterfowl into superb table fare.

BY MARK GOODWIN
PHOTOS BY DAVID STONNER

Nearly 10 years ago, my son, Mike, who was then 15 years old, stood on our patio in heavy winter camouflage clothing. He held a pair of drake mallards in each hand and couldn't contain his excitement as he described how he got them.

"Dad, we had over 100 mallards come in on us," he said. "You could hear their wings hitting limbs as they came in through the flooded timber."

The excitement of that wade-and-shoot hunt at Duck Creek turned my son into an obsessed waterfowler. Mike quickly developed waterfowling skills and began regularly bringing ducks and geese home and putting them in the freezer.

This posed a problem. I didn't hunt ducks or geese because I never cared for the taste of them. However, out of respect for the game my son was bringing home, and to honor his efforts, I had to learn how to make good use of his harvest.

I studied different wild-game cookbooks and tried numerous recipes. Some of them made the ducks and geese taste like tough liver. Other recipes, however, transformed waterfowl into superb cuisine.

Often recipes that call for domestic meats work well with wild game.

A great source for recipe ideas is the Internet. With a little experience you will develop a knack for determining the quality of a recipe by just looking at the ingredients.

If your past attempts at cooking ducks and geese produced results that were less than satisfactory, try the following preparation tips and recipes. I think you will be pleased.

RINSE AND MARINADE

Waterfowl need strong breast muscles to migrate between summer breeding areas and winter feeding grounds. Abundant blood vessels furnish these flight muscles with oxygen and other nutrients. The large quantity of blood found in waterfowl breast muscles is the main reason waterfowl have the “ducky” taste many people dislike.

The first step to converting waterfowl to quality food is to rinse the blood out of the meat. The most efficient way to do this is to fillet the breast meat off the bone, trim off any fat, and cut the meat into 1-inch chunks. Using only the breast meat seems wasteful, but the amount of meat on waterfowl legs and backs is minimal.

Place the chunked breast meat in a bowl and run water over it, swirling the

meat with your hands, a big spoon or a spatula. Squeeze the meat against the side of the bowl, then continue rinsing. When the meat no longer turns the water red or pink, cover the meat with water and place the bowl in the refrigerator. Let the meat soak at least eight hours or overnight. Repeat these steps, twice a day, for three days. Sure, this process takes a little time, but the results make the wait worthwhile.

The next step is marinating. Most grocery stores carry marinades bottled and ready to use; other marinades come in dry packets that require the addition of liquids, such as oil, water or vinegar.

Even when the marinade directions call for less time, I’ve found that proper seasoning of duck or goose meat requires about 24 hours in the refrigerator.

Experiment with different flavors. You might like a zesty Italian marinade, or a honey-teriyaki concoction. Some people like their marinades spicy or peppery.

With waterfowl properly rinsed and marinated, you are ready to cook. The following three recipes repeatedly pass the taste test in our family’s kitchen. ▲



GRILLED KABOBS

1. Slice duck or goose breasts off the bone, cut into 1-inch pieces and rinse as described. Cover and marinate the meat for 24 hours in the refrigerator, using your favorite marinade.
2. On a kabob skewer, place a 1-inch piece of green pepper, followed by a piece of seasoned duck or goose (as an option, wrap the duck or goose in bacon before skewering), followed by a 1-inch chunk of onion. Repeat this pattern until the skewer is full. For added color, use red, yellow, or orange bell peppers, along with the green.
3. Place over a medium-high charcoal fire and grill. Turn frequently, and baste using a fresh batch of marinade.
4. Cook until meat is medium-rare to medium-well—about 10 minutes.

Duck or goose cooked this way takes on a marvelous mix of flavors from the charcoal smoke, marinade, green peppers and onion. One to two full skewers will serve as the main course for an adult. A tossed salad and baked potato go well with this main course. These kabobs also work well as hors d’oeuvres.



DUCKS ARE WHAT THEY EAT

Ducks that eat a lot of grains during the winter months, such as mallards, teal, gadwalls, wigeons and pintails, generally have a milder flavor than diving ducks and shovelers, which primarily eat fish and invertebrates. However, proper rinsing, marinating and cooking will convert even the “fishiest” duck into a delectable main course.





DUCK OR GOOSE STEW

Cut 2–3 pounds of duck or goose into 1-inch pieces, rinse as described and marinate in two changes of red wine in the refrigerator for two days. Before starting, make sure you have the following ingredients:

6 slices of bacon, chopped
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 cloves of garlic, minced
3 beef bouillon cubes
3 cups water
2 cups red wine
1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
2 teaspoons of lemon juice
3 teaspoons of Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon thyme
2 bay leaves

1 large onion, chopped
6 carrots
1 15-oz can sweet corn, drained
2 15-oz cans green beans, drained
6 medium potatoes cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup chopped celery

Directions:

1. Remove goose or duck pieces from wine and let drain in a colander.
2. Place meat and flour, seasoned with salt and pepper to taste, in a covered container. Shake container vigorously to coat meat.
3. Cook bacon in large, heavy pot over medium-high until brown.
4. Add flour-coated meat to pot and brown.
5. Add garlic and cook for one minute.
6. Add bouillon cubes, 3 cups of water, wine, tomato sauce, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, thyme and bay leaves.
7. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 2 hours.
8. Chop onion and celery and cut carrots and potatoes into bite-sized pieces. Add to stew along with corn and green beans.
9. Simmer for 1 hour.
10. Mix 2 tablespoons flour with ½ cup water. Stir into stew. Cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Remove bay leaves. Yields 8–10 servings.

With this stew, all that is needed to form a complete meal are dinner rolls or bread sticks and a beverage of choice.

FRIED DUCK

This recipe is best applied to breast meat taken out of smaller ducks, such as teal and wood ducks.

1. Trim all fat from filleted duck breasts, then refrigerate the meat for two or three days, changing the water several times.
2. Pat breasts dry, then place them between two pieces of waxed paper and pound the fillets with a tenderizing hammer until they are half as thick as they were originally.
3. Lightly brush with olive oil, sprinkle both sides with seasoned salt, place in ziplock plastic bags and return to the refrigerator overnight, or for at least 8 hours.
4. Pour about $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch of oil into a skillet. Heat the oil to 350 degrees—medium high.
5. While the oil is heating, mix flour, pepper and seasoned salt to taste in a bowl. You may need more seasoned salt than you think.
6. Dip fillets in milk or buttermilk, roll them in the seasoned flour, then place coated meat in hot oil. Cook on one side until golden brown, about 5–10 minutes.
7. Carefully turn meat so as not to knock off batter, then fry until other side is brown.
8. Remove from skillet and drain on absorbent paper towels.

Prepared this way, fried duck is delicious. Biscuits and gravy along with green beans—with apple pie for dessert—help round out this meal.



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Why is Your Pond Muddy?, by Jim Low, NextGEN, Dec.

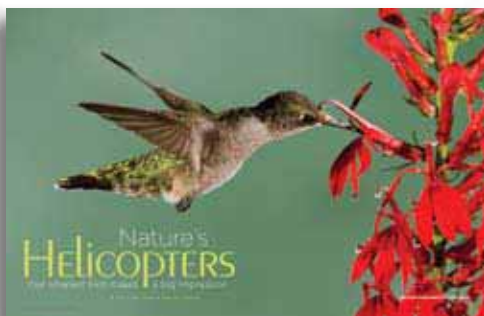
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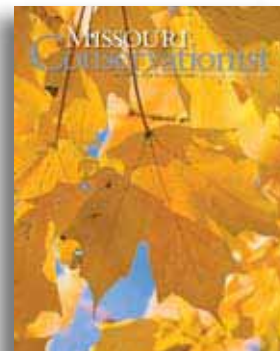
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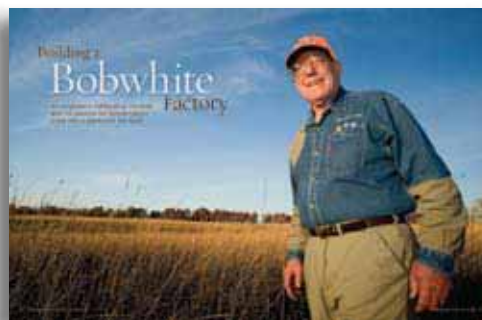
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Hunting and Fishing Calendar

FISHING

OPEN **CLOSE**

Black Bass (certain Ozark streams, see the *Wildlife Code*)

5/24/08 2/28/09

impoundments and other streams year-round

Bullfrogs and Green Frogs

Sunset 10/31/09
6/30/09

Gigging Nongame Fish

9/15/08 1/31/09

Trout Parks Catch and Release

11/14/08 2/9/09

Friday–Monday at Bennett Spring, Montauk and Roaring River
and daily at Maramec Springs

HUNTING

OPEN **CLOSE**

Coyotes

5/12/08 3/31/09

Crow

11/1/08 3/3/09

Deer

Archery

11/26/08 1/15/09

Firearms

Youth

1/3/09 1/4/09

Muzzleloader

11/28/08 12/7/08

Antlerless

12/13/08 12/21/08

Furbearers

11/15/08 1/31/09

Groundhog

5/12/08 12/15/08

Pheasants

North Zone

11/1/08 1/15/09

South Zone

12/1/08 12/12/08

Quail

11/1/08 1/15/09

Rabbits

10/1/08 2/15/09

Ruffed Grouse

10/15/08 1/15/09

Sora and Virginia Rails

9/1/08 11/9/08

Squirrels

5/24/08 2/15/09

Turkey Archery

11/26/08 1/15/09

Waterfowl

please see the *Waterfowl Hunting Digest* or

see www.missouriconservation.org/7573

Wilson's (common) Snipe

9/1/08 12/16/08

TRAPPING

OPEN **CLOSE**

Beaver and Nutria

11/15/08 3/31/09

Furbearers

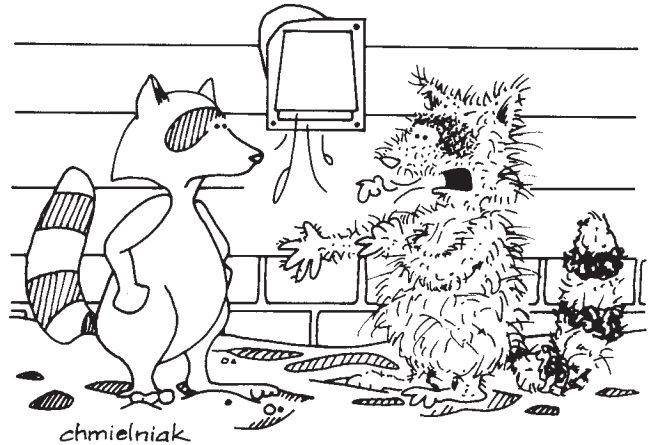
11/15/08 1/31/09

Otters and Muskrats

11/15/08 see *Wildlife Code*

For complete information about seasons, limits, methods and restrictions, consult the *Wildlife Code* and the current summaries of *Missouri Hunting and Trapping Regulations* and *Missouri Fishing Regulations*, the *Fall Deer and Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information*, the *Waterfowl Hunting Digest* and the *Migratory Bird Hunting Digest*. For more information visit www.MissouriConservation.org/8707 or permit vendors.

The Department of Conservation's computerized point-of-sale system allows you to purchase or replace your permits through local vendors or by phone. The toll-free number is 800-392-4115. Allow 10 days for delivery of telephone purchases. To purchase permits online go to www.wildlifelicense.com/mo/.



"I warmed up under the dryer vent and now I'm all static-y."

Contributors



TED BARE is a retired cartographic technician who worked with the U.S.G.S. Topographic Division in Rolla for 37 years. He is an avid waterfowl hunter, angler and outdoorsman. He and his wife, Nancy, now live in the Branson area where they enjoy fishing, boating and other activities with their children and grandchildren.

MARK GOODWIN lives in Jackson, where he recently retired from a career teaching biology at Jackson Senior High School. Mark enjoys a wide variety of outdoor activities. His favorite is living his connections with nature through hunting, fishing and converting game into food.



ANN KOENIG works as an urban forester in Columbia for the Department of Conservation. She and her husband enjoy getting their two young boys outside by walking to school, camping, visiting friends and family who own farms, and encouraging play in their yard.

TIME CAPSULE

December 1958

"To come upon a gigging light on a black night, when the river alone is lit to a leaden color (when giggers like it best), is a sight not soon forgotten," wrote Jim Keefe in *Gigging*, his article dedicated to the art and joy of hunting nongame fish species with a long, barbed pole. "No sport for sissies," gigging requires long hours, high tolerance for cold, wet conditions, and "real talent." Yet, somehow, the hours are curiously satisfying for its devotees. Giggers stand at the bow of a slow-moving boat, over gigging lights (generally gas-powered at that time), with a gigging iron in their hands, trying to identify and spear fish as they dart by, "a sensation not found in sun-dappled fishing days."—Contributed by the Circulation staff



AGENT NOTES

The best outdoor Christmas present for a child is the gift of your time.

I REMEMBER OPENING a Christmas present from my parents 18 years ago. I was excited to find a brand new .22-caliber rifle. It was the first firearm I ever owned, other than my trusty old BB gun.

That winter I hunted with my father on our property and harvested my first rabbit. My father spotted the rabbit in a thicket, and he calmly and patiently showed me where it was hiding. It took him nearly a half hour to teach me to pick out the eye of the rabbit among all the brush.

Receiving the rifle as a gift that Christmas was a special moment, but my memories of the day I spent hunting with my father are much more vivid. I can still feel the cold air on my cheeks, the crack of the rifle and brushing the soft rabbit fur as my father held the animal in his hand.

Adults who want to perk up a youngster's interest in the outdoors need few tools, but they have to be willing, like my father was, to give them the gift of time. Kids are more likely to get involved in outdoor activities if you provide them with companionship and direction.

Many adults claim that they can't find time to enjoy the outdoors with their children. Kids are busy, too, with school and after-school activities, plus their X-boxes, computers and TV. The outdoors is a good place to get away from it all. Look for things that might interest both you and your kids. Maybe you could take a walk on a nature trail or sit on the bank of a farm pond and watch bobbers for a few hours. Just enjoy yourselves!



Jason Braunecker is the conservation agent for Dekalb county, which is in the Northwest region. If you would like to contact the agent for your county, phone your regional Conservation office listed on Page 3.

behind the CODE

The gift of wildlife comes with regulations attached.

BY TOM Cwynar

Whether through good luck or great prowess you harvest fish or game, it's a splendid idea to share it with someone. The Conservation Federation and the Conservation Department have created the Share the Harvest Program to make it easy for successful deer hunters to donate some or all of their deer meat to needy people through participating charitable groups. However, the *Wildlife Code* also makes provisions for giving away harvested wildlife outside of this formal program.



Beneficiaries of your giving need not have a permit, but they are subject to possession limits of species, such as fish and small game, for which such limits are specified. Possession includes wildlife that is frozen, canned, smoked or refrigerated and any stored fish or game, or parts thereof, that are kept in your home, camp or place of lodging.

No one may possess any wildlife that was taken illegally. All wildlife gifts must be labeled with the species, the date taken, and the taker's permit number and full name and address. Labels for deer and turkey must also include the Telecheck confirmation number. Wildlife gifts from outside Missouri are subject to the laws and limits of the state where taken and must be properly labeled.

Any wildlife given away counts toward the taker's daily limit, and may be given away only at the completion of the day's fishing or hunting. In addition, only the taker may give away wildlife. It cannot be passed on, or re-gifted, by the recipient.

“I AM CONSERVATION”

Kim Lyda of Macon is passionate about being outdoors and is an avid hunter. “Even if I am not successful with a hunt,” said Lyda, “it is just nice being out in the woods enjoying nature.” Lyda said right after posing for this picture: “I found a spot to sit, and before long, a single doe came out. I needed for her to come in about 30 more yards before I could take a shot. She walked toward me and then turned back west. But, that’s OK, maybe next time.” To learn more about conservation activities, visit www.MissouriConservation.org—PHOTO BY DAVID STONNER



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www.MissouriConservation.org/15287

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Missouri households*